

001404

US EPA RECORDS CENTER REGION 5



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## INTER-OFFICE CORRESPONDENCE

## REILLY TAR &amp; CHEMICAL CORPORATION

TO: MR. R. J. BOYLE - INDPLS.  
FROM: Mr. H. L. Finch  
SUBJECT: FIRE - ST. LOUIS PARK REFINERY

OFFICE: St. Louis Park  
DATE: May 7, 1969

On Friday, May 2nd, we reported to Dr. Mootz that we had a fire in the refinery on No. 16 Still. The fire occurred on Thursday, May 1st at approximately 3:30 P.M. when we were about half way through our firing run.

The fire started in the front of No. 16 Still and we believe it was the result of grease drippings from an overhead valve. We formerly greased these valves with a grease gun and a noticeable amount of grease would be squeezed through the valve. To catch the drippings of the surplus grease, we would have a five gallon pail hanging from the valve. We changed our method of greasing the valves and went to solid sticks of grease that kept the valve in a much better condition. The pails were removed from the valves because there did not seem to be a significant amount of grease coming from the valve during greasing. Apparently there was enough grease drip from the valves to cause a buildup of sufficient quantity in the insulation of the stills to result in a fire. We are now placing buckets again on the valves and will keep them cleaned.

Damage, of course, occurred to the insulation as this had to be removed from the front of the still and on top of the still. Also, we had damage to the wiring that controls the firing of the stills. We were able to accomplish temporary wiring so that the stills were back in operation in approximately four hours. It was estimated that the cost of repairs as a result of the fire will be from \$800.00 to \$1,200.00.

The fire was extinguished by our own personnel by the use of one 2½ gallon foam extinguisher and two 20 pound powder extinguishers. The powder extinguishers actually put the fire out. When Bill Schmidt, the Still Fireman, noticed the fire, he called for help and the fire department was summoned. The fire department call was cancelled, however, as the fire was put out before they arrived.

Yours very truly,

  
H. L. Finch

HLP:gs

cc: Dr. P. J. Mootz - Indpls.

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